

Municipal and Industrial Discharges

Puget Sound Management Plan Goal

- Achieve comprehensive improvement in the control of toxic and other pollutants discharged into Puget Sound by industrial and municipal dischargers, thus reducing and eventually eliminating harm from such contaminants entering or accumulating in the Sound.

Strategies for Achieving Goal

- Adopt and, as needed, revise water and sediment quality standards.
- Require that all waste discharge permits include appropriate monitoring requirements and limitations on toxicants and other pollutants of concern.
- Develop the tools needed to make these permit improvements, including the permit writers' manual, data management, lab support, quality assurance and technical assistance and training.
- Strengthen pretreatment.
- Inspect permitted discharges and take enforcement actions for violations of discharge permits.
- Discover and control unpermitted discharges.

Background and Trends

The Action Team's approach to reducing toxic contaminants emphasizes controlling toxic discharges from municipal and industrial facilities through state-issued permits. The permits require the treatment of wastewater prior to discharge. Untreated or poorly treated wastewater contaminates water and sediments and degrades the health of marine life.

During the past decade, we have seen a decrease in the discharge of toxic chemicals to Puget Sound. Sediment standards have been developed and the state water quality standards have been updated to include toxics. Issued or re-issued permits call for enhanced levels of treatment. Permit writers are better trained. Dischargers receive technical assistance. Pollution prevention programs have been improved.

Over the years, industrial facilities have installed better treatment systems, and municipal plants have provided secondary treatment of sewage. But many effluents still exceed water quality standards at the end of the pipe, where they flow into Puget Sound, and many discharges contaminate sediments and marine life. Research by the National Marine Fisheries Service shows that fish in urban waterways are harmed by exposure to toxic chemicals.

Highlights of 2001-2003 Actions

- The Department of Ecology will implement the wastewater discharge permit program including permitting, compliance assurance, enforcement, technical assistance, inspections, monitoring, pretreatment, stormwater, public involvement, pollution prevention, and developing and maintaining systems and procedures for efficient and consistent implementation.
- Ecology will seek additional permit efficiencies, giving priority to keeping all permits environmentally current while reducing unnecessary paperwork. The permit backlog rate of expired permits will be reduced below 10 percent.

- Ecology will identify waters not meeting water quality standards and set priorities and schedule the development of water cleanup plans for waters not meeting standards. Ecology will complete the plans according to a 15-year schedule.

2001-2003 Budget for State Actions

Total Provided Funding	\$3,762,674
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STATE AGENCY ACTIONS	OUTCOMES	Pri-ori-ty	Non-point	Sal-mon	Budget Code	PS Plan Element	Action ID

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Identify waters not meeting water quality standards. Establish priorities and schedule the development of water cleanup plans--total maximum daily loads (TMDLs)--for waters not meeting standards. Complete TMDLs according to the 15-year schedule. Develop implementation plans for completed TMDLs; track implementation and progress towards meeting the standards.	The 303(d) list of impaired waters will be completed. (Ecology did the current 303(d) list in 1998, and EPA approved it in the year 2000. The next list is due in 2002.) TMDLs and implementation plans will be completed. Water quality and protection of beneficial uses of the state's waters will be improved.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DOE-02	P-2	80
Implement an effective wastewater discharge permit program. Core program elements include permitting, compliance assurance, enforcement, technical assistance, inspections, monitoring, pretreatment, stormwater, public involvement, pollution prevention, and developing and maintaining systems and procedures for efficient and consistent implementation.	Environmental criteria will be used to select facilities for inspection. Ecology will inspect a combination of major and minor facilities, in which major facility inspections will be counted at a 2:1 ratio to minor facilities. At a minimum, Ecology will inspect the equivalent of all major facilities each year. NPDES and state waste water discharge permits will be issued on a modified five-year schedule in scheduled watershed and according to environmental priorities. Additional permit efficiencies will be sought, giving priority to keeping all permits environmentally current while reducing unnecessary paperwork. The backlog rate of expired permits will be reduced below 10 percent.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DOE-02	P-2	81